



## State of Wisconsin \ DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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April 2004

### TO THE FIRE SERVICE OF WISCONSIN

The next funding cycle for **Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grants** to Wisconsin county fire associations is about to begin. This program, formerly known both as the Title IV and as the Rural Community Fire Protection grant program, provides 50 percent reimbursement for eligible project costs for county fire associations and requires 50 percent in matching funds from the applicant. Federal funds for the VFA grant program are made available to Wisconsin through the State Forester.

Upon recommendation from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fire Department Advisory Council (membership list enclosed), this year's VFA program allows VFA grant eligibility to County Fire Association applicants statewide regardless of level of protection. Priority is given to Cooperative (CO-OP) protection area county associations. Only one application will be allowed per county. Existing individual fire departments are not eligible to apply nor can an individual fire department receive money from more than one county fire association VFA grant.

An application form for 50/50 matching funds from the Volunteer Fire Assistance grant program is enclosed along with a map to help determine if a county fire organization serves a CO-OP or organized protection area.

### HOW IS AN APPLICATION RANKED TO DETERMINE ITS PRIORITY?

The Division of Forestry established the following VFA grant application ranking and priority criteria for grant funds:

- County Fire Association Applicant Rank Determination (CO-OP or Organized Protection Area)  
Based on the type of protection area (CO-OP or Organized) that 50% or more of the member departments serve in their primary service or contract area (see enclosed map for help identifying rank determination)
- Priority Criteria
  1. First priority – CO-OP area County Fire Association applicants that did not receive grant funds in year 2003; all eligible items in requested categories funded to maximum grant amount.
  2. Second priority – CO-OP area County Fire Association applicants that did receive grant funds in year 2003; all eligible items in requested categories funded to maximum grant amount.
  3. Third priority
    - a. Organized protection area County Fire Association applicants
    - b. Only Personal Protective Equipment category requests funded
  4. Fourth priority
    - a. Organized protection area County Fire Association applicants
    - b. All project category requests funded with the exception of personal protective equipment (funded under "Third priority")

The Volunteer Fire Assistance funds may be used for the following types of project categories: personal protective equipment, organization, training, prevention, dry hydrant, communication equipment, and equipment. No grant funds will be provided for purchase of buildings or fire trucks, regardless of size or cost. The minimum VFA grant amount is \$1,500 (\$3,000 total project cost) while the maximum VFA grant amount is \$10,000 (\$20,000 total project cost).

The following project categories will be considered when awarding VFA grants for the current grant cycle (see the separate list of eligible/ineligible items included in this application packet):

- **Personal Protective Equipment (*highest priority category*):** Personal safety equipment—wildland fire and structural—must meet NIOSH (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health), NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) or OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) standards; Fire protective clothing—Nomex, PASS (Personal Alert Safety Systems) devices, breathing apparatus
- **Communication equipment:** Radios/Pagers—must be compatible with the state governmental radio plan; multi-channel radios should include county fire and FIRECOM frequencies; WISTAC and MARC compatibility recommended. Radios should also meet the federal narrowband frequency standard.
- **Prevention Projects:** Posters, Handouts, Smoke detectors, Numbering systems, Urban interface videos and brochures
- **Dry Hydrants (water points)** — Please note that if you do receive dry hydrant funding, one of the following will be required:
  - For a body of water that is a public waterway, a DNR-approved Application/Permit for Dry Hydrant Projects (Form 3500-96) that covers the period of the installation, or a DNR letter of exemption from submittal of the Application/Permit for Dry Hydrant Projects. Contact your local DNR representative for assistance and to assure that you have a valid dry hydrant permit or exemption letter to send the VFA Grant Manager.
  - If the body of water is a private body of water, i.e. farm pond, then a letter from the private landowner that gives permission for the dry hydrant is sufficient documentation to send to the VFA Grant Manager. Contact your local DNR representative for a copy of publication **PUB-FR-044 2003Rev, A Guide to Planning and Installing Dry Fire Hydrants**, that has a sample landowner letter to use as a guide.
- **Equipment:** Pumps, Hoses, Class A foam/foam equipment, Structural and Wildland tools, Equipment
- **Training:** Videos; Instructional materials; Structural, Wildland and Incident Command System certified training and tuition for attending classes
- **Organization:** New fire department start-up efforts (first three years only)

If you plan to purchase any items from the **DNR Neil H. LeMay Forestry Center** at Tomahawk, you can view a list of the most-often-ordered items by grant recipients at the DNR website:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/fire/firedept.html> then cursor down to The LeMay Center and click on *The catalog* -- or you can call the LeMay Forestry Center at (715) 453-2188. ***It should be noted that prices in this catalog are subject to change.***

**A COMPLETE APPLICATION CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:**

- ✓ **A COMPLETED, SIGNED AND DATED APPLICATION POSTMARKED BY JUNE 1, 2004;** an application received with a postmark date after June 1, 2004, will not be considered for grant eligibility and will be returned to the sender,
- ✓ **AN ITEMIZED LIST** of PPE, communication equipment, prevention, dry hydrants, and equipment that will be purchased with grant funds or local matching funds,
- ✓ **A COPY OF YOUR COUNTY FIRE ASSOCIATION'S CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS** (not required IF an application was previously submitted), **AND**
- ✓ **A LIST OF FIRE DEPARTMENTS IN THE COUNTY FIRE ASSOCIATION** (not required IF an application was previously submitted).

**MAIL YOUR APPLICATION TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:**

**VFA Grant Manager - CF/8  
Department of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 7921  
Madison, WI 53707-7921**

Applications will be reviewed and awards made in September with a project end date of April 15, 2005.  
Purchases made prior to the grant award date will be ineligible for matching funds.

If you have any questions about this grant program or need assistance in completing the application, contact your local DNR forester/ranger. If you need help in identifying who this person is, visit DNR's automated staff directory: <http://dnr.wi.gov/staffdir/SearchSubj.asp>

Instructions to conduct your search:

- Enter "**fire grants**" in the SEARCH field;
- Under REFINE YOUR SEARCH: **click** on drop down menu; **click** on your county;
- **Click** on the SEARCH button.

You can also get more information by visiting the DNR website:

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/caer/cfa/LR/VFA/grants.html> or calling a DNR program contact listed below.

<b>Contact a local DNR Forester/Ranger in your area</b>	
<b>DNR/VFA Program Contacts:</b>	
Eileen Trainor, VFA Grant Manager	608-267-0848
Kathy Wells, VFA Grant Assistant	608-266-0918
Christopher Klahn, Cooperative Forest Fire Specialist	608-297-2214 or 608-516-7280

Sincerely,

Kathryn A. Curtner, Director  
Bureau of Community Financial Assistance

Enclosures:

DNR Fire Department Advisory Council Membership List

VFA Grant Application – Form 4300-058

Map of DNR Protection Areas

VFA Eligible/Ineligible Items List

cc: DNR Regional Forestry Leaders  
DNR Foresters/Rangers

**Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources/Division of Forestry  
Fire Department Advisory Council (FDAC) Membership List - March 2004**

Christopher Klahn, **Co-Chairperson**  
DNR Cooperative Forest Fire Specialist  
Division of Forestry  
P.O. Box 801  
Montello, WI 53949  
(O) 608-297-2214  
(C) 608-516-7280  
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[Christopher.Klahn@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:Christopher.Klahn@dnr.state.wi.us)

Jim Stormer  
Wisconsin State Fire Fighters Assoc.  
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Jeff Amo, **Co-Chairperson**  
20 E Adams St.  
Black River Falls, WI 54615-0435  
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(C) 608-797-3326  
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Tim Houslet, Chief  
Oxford Fire Department  
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Work- [thouslet@co.marquette.wi.us](mailto:thouslet@co.marquette.wi.us)  
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Harold (Smokey) Smith, Chief  
Minong Fire Department  
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Minong, WI 54859  
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(cell) 715-520-2519  
[minongfire@centurytel.net](mailto:minongfire@centurytel.net)

Tom Marini, Chief  
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Mark Wickham, Chief  
Lodi Fire Department  
P.O. Box 304  
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(Station) 608-592-3221  
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Gerald Minor  
WI State Fire Chief's Association  
Pittsville Fire Department  
5388 4<sup>th</sup> Ave, Box 241  
Pittsville, WI 54466  
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